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Appl. No. 09/633,865

Amdt. Dated December 12, 2005

Reply to Office Action of October 21, 2005

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheets of drawings are formal replacement drawings, submitted in response to the Examiner's objection to the informal drawings, and are in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(d) and are of sufficient quality to overcome the Examiner objection. The sheets replace the original sheets that include Figs. 1-6. There are no substantive amendments to Figs. 1-6, except that in Fig. 2, the label for the "VIRTUAL SWITCH CONTROL FUNCTION" has been changed from "34" to ---32---, which accurately reflects the disclosure at page 8, line 2, of the specification.

These formal drawings and the change to Fig. 2 do not introduce new matter. Accordingly, an indication of approval of the newly submitted drawings is respectfully requested.

Attachment: Replacement Sheets (Figs. 1-6)

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for allowing claims 1-4 and 6-38, and for indicating the allowability of claims 55 and 60, if rewritten in independent from to include the limitations of the respective base claims and any intervening claims. Accordingly, Applicants have amended independent claims 51 and 56 to substantially include the limitations of allowable claims 55 and 60, respectively.

Applicants would also like to thank the Examiner for his courtesy in discussing the Official Action with Applicants' representative, Van Ernest of Greenblum & Bernstein, P.L.C., on December 12, 2005. In particular, the Examiner clarified that the first paragraph following heading no. 5 on page 3 of the Official Action includes a typographical error. Therefore, the phrase "claims 1 and 6" should be replaced with ---claim 51---.

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 39-50, 52-55, and 57-59 will have been canceled, without prejudice and without disclaimer of the subject matter, and claims 55 and 60 will have been amended, as discussed above. Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance.

Also, upon entry of the present amendment, the drawings will have been replaced to address the Examiner's objection to the informal drawings, including Figs. 1-6. The replacement sheets are in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(d) and are of sufficient quality to overcome the Examiner objection. The only substantive amendment is to Fig. 2, in which the label for the "VIRTUAL SWITCH CONTROL FUNCTION" has been changed from "34" to ---32---. This amendment accurately reflects the disclosure at page 8, line 2,

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of the specification. No new matter has been introduced in the application by the amended drawings.

In the above-referenced Official Action, the Examiner rejected claims 51-54 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over CLARK et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,970,064) in view of CHEN (U.S. Patent No. 6,563,835). The Examiner rejected claims 39-41 and 43-50 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MA et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,953,338) in view of LYON et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,892,924). The Examiner rejected claim 42 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MA et al. in view of LYON et al. and further in view of HUGHES et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,842,040). The Examiner rejected claim 56 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MA et al. in view of CHEN. The Examiner rejected claims 57-59 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over MA et al. in view of CHEN further in view of CLARK et al.

Although Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's analysis, in the interest of furthering prosecution and obtaining a timely allowance of the claims, Applicants have cancelled all rejected claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims.

In view of the herein contained amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request an indication of the allowability of all pending claims, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is believed to be appropriate and proper.

Any amendments to the claims in this Reply, which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made

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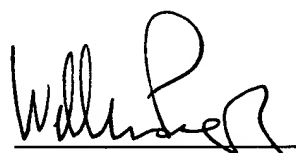
for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

In response to the Examiner's statement of reasons for indication of allowable subject matter, Applicants wish to clarify the record with respect to the basis for the patentability of claims in the present application. In this regard, while Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that certain identified features are not disclosed by the references, Applicants submit that each of the claims in the present application recite a particular combination of features, and that the basis for patentability of each of these claims is based on the totality of the particular features recited therein.

Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this Reply or the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,
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